

Dakota War of 1862: Remembrance and Historiography

Lesson Overview:

As cited in Julie Anderson's dissertation *Reconciling Memory: Landscapes, Commemorations, and Enduring Conflicts of the U.S. Dakota War of 1862*¹ the Dakota Conflict has gone by many different titles in history textbooks "Sioux Massacre" (1915 and 1929), "The Sioux War of 1862" (1918), "What Happened to the Indians" (1936), "The Sioux Uprising" (1948), "Minnesota's Part in Our Nation's Wars" (1950), "The Sioux War" (1951 and 1955), "Red Man Against White Man" (1964), "Trials of Statehood" (1977), "War at Home" (1989), and "Minnesota's Civil War" (2003). In this activity, students will confront this historiographical challenge.

Students will use various perspectives from primary sources to create a 200 word or less summary for a commemorative plaque of the events of the Dakota War of 1862 which best represents, honors, and remembers the different groups involved in the conflict. The plaque will be placed at Fort Snelling to inform people who visit the site of the conflict.

Primary Concepts: Semantics, historiography, commemorative

Lesson Objectives:

ESWBAT reconstruct the past using various perspectives on the Dakota War of 1862.

Materials:

- Included: Building Background Knowledge Worksheet, Pre-writing ABC-List Worksheet, Reflection and Self-Assessment Worksheet
- Needed: Poster Paper, Playing Cards, Markers with different colors, Post-it Notes, Computer Lab or Access to the internet for each individual student (*students could also work in pairs*)

Educators should gather several (3-4) short texts (readings, recordings, etc.) into primary source bundles for each of the four categories from the following site: <http://www.usdakotawar.org/>.

- U.S. Military and Government from Mid-1800s
- Newcomers (European-American immigrants/farmers) from Mid-1800s
- Dakota from Mid-1800s
- Dakota Community Today

Lesson Plan

Building Background Knowledge:

- Students should search <http://www.usdakotawar.org/> to gather evidence to build background knowledge to complete the worksheet.

¹ Anderson, Julie Humann. *Reconciling memory: Landscapes, commemorations, and enduring conflicts of the US-Dakota War of 1862*. Georgia State University, 2011.

Body of Lesson:

- Count the number of students in your class. Use playing cards to randomly organize students in groups. For example, if there were 24 students in your class, pull out the playing cards Ace through 6 and pass them out to the class. If your class does not have multiples of four teachers may need to have some groups with additional people. Students write down their playing card suit and number on their Building Background Knowledge worksheet.
- Tell students to go to different parts of the classroom based on their suite groups. After students have gone to their given locations, pass out the primary source bundles for their group.
 - Spades: United States perspective mid-1800s
 - Clubs: Dakota perspective mid-1800s
 - Hearts: Dakota now
 - Diamonds: Newcomers mid-1800s
- Research and gather evidence for their group's perspective.
- Students will read the sources and annotate them by:
 - Circling words and sentences they do not know or understand
 - Underlining main ideas
 - Staring aspects of the text that they believe should be remembered, honored, or represented in the plaque
 - Students should write a brief summary for each primary source
- In their suit groups, complete the Pre-write: ABC List: Terms, Themes, Events, and People of the Dakota Conflict
 - Write down one or more Terms, Themes, Events, and People of the Dakota War related to the Dakota War of 1862 for each of the letters of the alphabet A through Z
 - Students should start brainstorming using their memory
 - Next, look at their primary sources and background worksheets
 - Lastly, share and compare within your group
 - Individually rank your top 10 topics based on their importance in representing the Dakota War
 - Individually write why they selected the top 3 as the most important
 - *The last two steps could be done as a group as well*
- Students get into number groups.
 - Students will use their Use top 3 from the Pre-write: ABC list worksheet and arguments for each issue as a starting point for their plaque.
- Task:
 - Students will use various perspectives from primary sources to create a 200 words or less summary for a commemorative plaque of the events of the Dakota War of 1862 which best represents, honors, and remembers the different groups involved in the conflict. The plaque will be placed at Fort Snelling to inform people who visit the site of the conflict.
 - Students, in groups, will create a draft for their commemorative plaque.
 - Students should write their final version of their draft on a large post-it poster and put it up in the room.
 - Pass out different colored markers for each group and provide each group with post-it notes (students could actually write on posters as well)

- Students will put small sticky notes on or next to the plaques with questions, additions, challenges, and/or concerns for each the plaques.
 - Students will underline parts of other students plaques with different colors for each group that they believe is well-written and best represents, honors, and remembers the various accounts of the different groups involved in the conflict.
 - Students will spend time at each of the plaques, rotating, until they return to their plaque.
- **Plaque Revisions:**
 - Students will revise their plaque using the feedback from the other groups and ideas and language of other plaques they read and provided with feedback in their Gallery Walk.
- **Where do you stand?**
 - Create an open space in your classroom, to allow students to stand by each of the plaques, and/or in the middle of the classroom.
 - Provide students with an opportunity to read the final drafts for the plaques.
 - Tell the students the name of the activity Where do you “stand.” Students will “stand” by the plaque that best fits the description given in the prompts. If students are unsure where they stand, they can stand in the middle of the classroom. In addition, if their views change they can move to different locations.
 - Read the following prompts and allow various students to explain their position or why it may have changed. Which of the plaques best represents:
 - United States Military and Government from the Mid 1800s?
 - Newcomers from the Mid 1800s?
 - Dakota from the Mid 1800s?
 - Dakota Now?
 - Show students the Actual Plaque at Fort Snelling and explain its focus on the internment of the Dakota. Compare their plaques with the classes based on the task given to students.
 - Students complete the Reflection and Self-Assessment.
- **Additional Options and Extensions of Learning**
 - Students choose the location of their plaque at Fort Snelling.
 - Students choose images to accompany their plaque.
 - Extension of Learning:
 - What can be learned from other countries responses and ways of dealing with genocide and atrocities?
 - Socratic Seminar: Attack on the Fort Snelling Bar and Grill
<https://theartstack.com/artist/jim-denomie/attack-fort-snelling-ba>

Who was involved in the Dakota Conflict? What are the different groups involved?

Who are the key historical figures?

Groups

Brief Description

[illegible]

Historical Figure

Brief Description of role in the conflict

[illegible]

Holocaust Education in a Global Perspective: Educator Workshop, 2015
Center for Holocaust & Genocide Studies
University of Minnesota

Historical Figure

Brief Description of role in the conflict

[illegible]

Summarize the events of the Dakota Conflict: *What is the Dakota Conflict of 1862?*

[illegible]

*** What is the Historical Significance of the Dakota Conflict of 1862? Why is this conflict important?**

[illegible]

Document 2:

Reflection

Are there other groups or perspectives that should have been represented, or better represented?

If so, why?

Look at your summary from the *Building Background* worksheet. Did your views about the events of the Dakota War of 1862 change from the beginning of this activity? Why or Why not?

Were there aspects of the event that were left out that should have been included on the plaques created and selected during the “Where do you stand” activity?

What did you learn about writing history? What was challenging about writing the plaque? How did you weigh the various perspectives on the event?

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Was this event genocide? **genocide:** *the deliberate killing of a large group of people, esp. those of a particular ethnic group or nation.*
Explain. Why or why not?

Raphael Lemkin, the man who coined the term, defined genocide as follows:

Generally speaking, genocide does not necessarily mean the immediate destruction of a nation, except when accomplished by mass killings of all members of a nation. It is intended rather to signify a coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of essential foundations of the life of national groups, with the aim of annihilating the groups themselves. The objectives of such a plan would be the disintegration of the political and social institutions, of culture, language, national feelings, religion, and the economic existence of national groups, and the destruction of the personal security, liberty, health, dignity, and even the lives of the individuals belonging to such groups.

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

- by the United States Government
- Dakota
- other citizens of the United States
- Organizations (International, National, Local)

Document 3:

Evidence of Learning:

Staple your evidence of learning in this order to the back of this worksheet

Completed the Building Background Worksheet on the Dakota Conflict	No / Rarely	1	2	3	4	5 Usually / Yes
Gathered evidence and summarized documents in your Perspective Bundle	No / Rarely	1	2	3	4	5 Usually / Yes
Completed the Pre-write ABC List Worksheet	No / Rarely	1	2	3	4	5 Usually / Yes
Helped write the plaque for our number group	No / Rarely	1	2	3	4	5 Usually / Yes
Participated in the Revisions Gallery Walk by reading the plaques and providing feedback	No / Rarely	1	2	3	4	5 Usually / Yes
Helped revise the plaque for our number group	No / Rarely	1	2	3	4	5 Usually / Yes
Participated in the plaque selection for different perspectives Where do you “stand” activity?	No / Rarely	1	2	3	4	5 Usually / Yes
Learned how to write history	No / Rarely	1	2	3	4	5 Usually / Yes
Overall Evidence of Learning Grade	No / Rarely	1	2	3	4	5 Usually / Yes

Document 4:

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Z _____

#1 _____ Explain why?

#2 _____ Explain why?

#3 _____ Explain why?

Document 5:

Plaque at Fort Snelling

***Wokiksuye K'a Woyuonihan
Remembering and Honoring***

This memorial honors the sixteen hundred Dakota people, many of them women and children, who were imprisoned here at Fort Snelling in the aftermath of the 1862 United States Dakota Conflict. Frightened, uprooted, and uncertain of the fate of their missing relatives, the interned Dakota suffered severe hardship. At least 130 died during the cold winter months of captivity.

In May, 1863, the survivors from the camp were crowded aboard steamboats and taken to Crow Creek in South Dakota. Those who survived Crow Creek were moved again three years later to the Santee Reservation in Nebraska.

The pipestone in the center of the memorial was placed here by Amos Owen of the Prairie Island Indian Community during a ceremony in 1987. Please be respectful of this sacred place.

